

*These events are based on my own experiences. Names and details of some circumstances have been changed to protect the identities of people involved. Wonderful people are identified by name. This book reflects my present recollections of experiences over time. Some events have been compressed, and some dialogue has been recreated.*

## **Foreword**

by John W. Hickenlooper

I'm an extrovert at heart. Being a geologist, brewpub owner and entrepreneur, Mayor, and Governor have all been rewarding work by themselves. Most of the time.

Each time I've embarked on something new, it's always the people involved that have made my career the most fulfilling. One of the true joys of working in public service is the opportunity to collaborate with exceptional people who, despite the noise and rancor that frequently accompany the job, remain focused on doing the most good for as many people as possible.

Tisha Schuller, without question, is one of those people.

I first met Tisha Schuller as Mayor of Denver. As Governor, I had the opportunity to work closely with her on energy issues facing Coloradans during her time as the President and CEO of the Colorado Oil and Gas Association. It was reassuring to find a fellow geology nerd and eternal (and yes, maybe a tad naive) optimist working in one of the most contentious industries in Colorado, not to mention leading that industry's trade group. You can count on Tisha to always lead a thoughtful discussion on energy, while listening diligently to any counterpoints.

The progress we've made in making Colorado a great place to do business, while having the highest environmental protections, was possible because Tisha and other like minded leaders were able to have thoughtful discussions, embrace compromise, and find middle ground.

And I think Tisha has arguably the best background to give detailed advice on how to get to a place of compromise. At first blush, however, it may not seem that way. She is a former ultimate frisbee playing self described hippy who graduated from Stanford and lives eco-consciously in a cabin west of Boulder, who became the public face of oil and gas in Colorado and managed the industry first hand through five major, precedent setting, regulations.

This is usually how a fish out of water movie starts.

But as Tisha puts it, finding the middle comes down more to being dedicated and pragmatic, having an open mind, carefully taking stock of your beliefs (and regularly reexamining those beliefs), talking directly with the individuals and families your work impacts, all while having a rigorous mentor to help you identify gaps you might be missing.

With honesty and a good dose of humor, Tisha outlines how she came to these conclusions. It is a story equal parts personal narrative and a first hand account of oil and gas development in Colorado, as well as a guide for approaching controversial topics with humility and an open mind. Not to mention lessons on energy development in the 21st century on par with a university lecture.

It's worth noting, you don't have to be working in the energy sector to learn from Tisha's story and experience.

It's a story that outlines the need for each of us to be more open to discourse in our day to day lives.

Which has become an urgent need in our country.

In recent years, it's become very easy to split ourselves into teams and camps, complete with labels or monikers.

Liberal or conservative. Environmentalist or oil and gas industry representative. What news we read or listen to.

Our politics and government often appear intractably stubborn; it seems pessimistically inevitable that things will only get more divided and contentious.

Especially as listening and compromise aren't nearly as sexy when compared to having two diametrically opposed camps battling to the bitter end, hellbent on victory at any cost. As Tisha says, the loudest and most opinionated often dominate discussion.

Lincoln once said strong passions today will be our future enemies. But reason, "cold, calculating, unimpassioned reason, must furnish all the materials for our future support and defence."

Tisha's first hand experiences matter in today's environment.

We have to get back to that middle ground.

To recognize groups are not faceless monoliths, but made of people who want the best for them and their families. To be above winning and losing. To recognize that disagreement is good if done with respect. That changing your mind when presented with facts is natural and should be commended.

And most of all, to sit down and have honest discussions with one another.

For example, if you talk to both the oil and gas industry and those concerned about its development, both will want it done in the safest manner possible. Few, if any, actively want to harm our natural spaces. Once we recognize where we get along, rather than focusing on our disagreements and automatic defenses, there is a lot of great work to be done to help in the community.

In an era of Twitter, soundbites, and scoring cheap shots for political points, we need more leaders like Tisha. She is the kind of leader that makes Colorado such a great place to live and do business. She is bold, independent, and unapologetically committed to the common good.

Let's follow her lead.

Giddyup.

John W. Hickenlooper  
Governor of Colorado  
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